

The Alton Framework for Teaching: Observation Rubric for Teachers

Directions: Evaluators will use the Observation Rubric when observing and providing written feedback following any observation. Evaluators will note any evidence collected in the “Evidence” rows underneath each component description.

DOMAIN I: PREPARATION AND PLANNING				
	Unsatisfactory <input type="radio"/>	Needs Improvement <input type="radio"/>	Proficient <input type="radio"/>	Excellent <input type="radio"/>
1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy	The teacher’s plans and practice display little knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between different aspects of the content, or the instructional practices specific to that content.	The teacher’s plans and practice reflect some awareness of the important concepts in the discipline, prerequisite relationships between them, and the instructional practices specific to that content.	The teacher’s plans and practice reflect solid knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between important concepts, and the instructional practices specific to that content.	The teacher’s plans and practice reflect extensive knowledge of the content and the structure of the content. The teacher actively builds on knowledge of prerequisites and misconceptions when describing instruction or seeking causes for student misunderstanding.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory <input type="radio"/>	Needs Improvement <input type="radio"/>	Proficient <input type="radio"/>	Excellent <input type="radio"/>
1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students	The teacher demonstrates little or no knowledge of students’ backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs, and does not seek such understanding.	The teacher indicates the importance of understanding students’ backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs, and attains this knowledge for the class as a whole.	The teacher actively seeks knowledge of students’ backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs, and attains this knowledge for groups of students.	The teacher actively seeks knowledge of students’ backgrounds, cultures, skills, language proficiency, interests, and special needs from a variety of sources, and attains this knowledge for individual students.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory <input type="radio"/>	Needs Improvement <input type="radio"/>	Proficient <input type="radio"/>	Excellent <input type="radio"/>

1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes	Instructional outcomes are unsuitable for students, represent trivial or low-level learning, or are stated only as activities. They do not permit viable methods of assessment.	Instructional outcomes are of moderate rigor and are suitable for some students, but consist of a combination of activities and goals, some of which permit viable methods of assessment. They reflect more than one type of learning, but the teacher makes no attempt at coordination or integration.	Instructional outcomes are stated as goals reflecting high-level learning and curriculum standards. They are suitable for most students in the class, represent different types of learning, and can be assessed. The outcomes reflect opportunities for coordination.	Instructional outcomes are stated as goals that can be assessed, reflecting rigorous learning and curriculum standards. They represent different types of content, offer opportunities for both coordination and integration, and take account of the needs of individual students.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources & Designing Coherent Instruction	The teacher demonstrates little or no familiarity with resources to enhance own knowledge, to use in teaching, or for students who need them. The teacher does not use the available resources. The series of learning experiences is poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes and does not represent a coherent structure. The experiences are suitable for only some students.	The teacher demonstrates some familiarity with resources available through the school or district to enhance own knowledge, to use in teaching, or for students who need them. The teacher does not use the available resources. The series of learning experiences demonstrates partial alignment with instructional outcomes, and some of the experiences are likely to engage students in significant learning. The lesson or unit has a recognizable structure and reflects partial knowledge of students and resources.	The teacher is fully aware of the resources available through the school or district to enhance own knowledge, to use in teaching, or for students who need them. The teacher coordinates knowledge of content, of students, and of resources to design a series of learning experiences aligned to instructional outcomes and suitable for groups of students. The lesson or unit has a clear structure and is likely to engage students in significant learning.	The teacher seeks out resources in and beyond the school or district in professional organizations, on the Internet, and in the community to enhance own knowledge, to use in teaching, and for students who need them. The teacher coordinates knowledge of content, of students, and of resources, to design a series of learning experiences aligned to instructional outcomes, differentiated where appropriate to make them suitable to all students and likely to engage them in significant learning. The lesson or unit structure is clear and allows for different pathways according to student needs.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
1e: Designing Student Assessments	The teacher's plan for assessing student learning contains no clear criteria or standards, is poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes, or is inappropriate for many students. The results of assessment have minimal impact on the design of future instruction.	The teacher's plan for student assessment is partially aligned with the instructional outcomes, without clear criteria, and inappropriate for at least some students. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for the class as a whole.	The teacher's plan for student assessment is aligned with the instructional outcomes, uses clear criteria, and is appropriate to the needs of students. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for groups of students.	The teacher's plan for student assessment is fully aligned with the instructional outcomes, with clear criteria and standards that show evidence of student contribution to their development. Assessment methodologies may have been adapted for individuals, and the teacher intends to use assessment results to plan future instruction for individual students.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

DOMAIN 2: CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are negative, inappropriate, or insensitive to students' cultural backgrounds and are characterized by sarcasm, put-downs, or conflict.	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are generally appropriate and free from conflict, but may be characterized by occasional displays of insensitivity or lack of responsiveness to cultural or developmental differences among students.	Classroom interactions between the teacher and students and among students are polite and respectful, and are appropriate to the cultural and developmental differences among groups of students.	Classroom interactions between the teacher and individual students are highly respectful, reflecting genuine sensitivity to students' cultures and levels of development. Students themselves ensure high levels of civility among members of the class.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2b: Establishing a culture for learning	The classroom environment conveys a negative culture for learning, characterized by low teacher commitment to the subject, low expectations for student achievement, and little or no student pride in work.	The teacher's attempt to create a culture for learning is partially successful, with little teacher commitment to the subject, modest expectations for student achievement, and little student pride in work.	The classroom culture is characterized by high expectations for most students and genuine commitment to the subject by both teacher and students, with students demonstrating pride in their work.	High levels of student energy and teacher passion for the subject create a culture for learning and a belief in the importance of the subject and all students hold themselves to high standards of performance—for example, by initiating improvements to their work.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2c: Managing classroom procedures	Much instructional time is lost because of inefficient classroom routines and procedures for transitions, handling of supplies, and performance of noninstructional duties. The physical environment is unsafe, or some students don't have access to learning.	Some instructional time is lost because classroom routines and procedures for transitions, handling of supplies, and performance of noninstructional duties are only partially effective. The classroom is safe, and essential learning is accessible to most students.	Little instructional time is lost because of classroom routines and procedures for transitions, handling of supplies, and performance of noninstructional duties, which occur smoothly. The classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to all students.	Students contribute to the seamless operation of classroom routines and procedures for transitions, handling of supplies, and performance of noninstructional duties. The classroom is safe, and the physical environment ensures the learning of all students.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2d: Managing Student Behavior	There is no evidence that standards of conduct have been established and little or no teacher monitoring of student behavior. Response to student misbehavior is repressive or disrespectful of student dignity.	It appears that the teacher has made an effort to establish standards of conduct for students. The teacher tries, with uneven results, to monitor student behavior and respond to student misbehavior.	Standards of conduct appear to be clear to students, and the teacher monitors student behavior against those standards. The teacher's response to student misbehavior is appropriate and respects the students' dignity.	Standards of conduct are clear, with evidence of student participation in setting them. The teacher's monitoring of student behavior is subtle and preventive, and the teacher's response to student misbehavior is sensitive to individual student needs. Students take an active role in monitoring the standards of behavior.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3a: Communicating with students	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are unclear or confusing to students. The teacher's use of language contains errors or is inappropriate for students' cultures or levels of development.	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are clarified after initial confusion; the teacher's use of language is correct but may not be completely appropriate for students' cultures or levels of development.	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are clear to students. Communications are appropriate for students' cultures and levels of development.	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are clear to students. The teacher's oral and written communication is clear and expressive, appropriate for students' cultures and levels of development, and anticipates possible student misconceptions.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3b: Using questioning / prompts and discussion	The teacher's questions are low-level or inappropriate, eliciting limited student participation and recitation rather than discussion.	Some of the teacher's questions elicit a thoughtful response, but most are low-level, posed in rapid succession. The teacher's attempts to engage all students in the discussion are only partially successful.	Most of the teacher's questions elicit a thoughtful response, and the teacher allows sufficient time for students to answer. All students participate in the discussion, with the teacher stepping aside when appropriate.	Questions reflect high expectations and are culturally and developmentally appropriate. Students formulate many of the high-level questions and ensure that all voices are heard.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3c: Engaging students in learning	Activities and assignments, materials, and groupings of students are inappropriate for the instructional outcomes or students' cultures or levels of understanding, resulting in little intellectual engagement. The lesson has no structure or is poorly paced.	Activities and assignments, materials, and groupings of students are partially appropriate to the instructional outcomes or students' cultures or levels of understanding, resulting in moderate intellectual engagement. The lesson has a recognizable structure, but that structure is not fully maintained.	Activities and assignments, materials, and groupings of students are fully appropriate for the instructional outcomes and students' cultures and levels of understanding. Most students are engaged in work of a high level of rigor. The lesson's structure is coherent, with appropriate pace.	Students, throughout the lesson, are highly intellectually engaged in significant learning, and make material contributions to the activities, student groupings, and materials. The lesson is adapted as necessary to the needs of individuals, and the structure and pacing allow for student reflection and closure.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3d: Using Assessment in Instruction	Assessment is not used in instruction, either through monitoring of progress by the teacher or students, or through feedback to students. Students are unaware of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work.	Assessment is occasionally used in instruction, through some monitoring of progress of learning by the teacher and/or students. Feedback to students is uneven, and students are aware of only some of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work.	Assessment is regularly used in instruction, through self-assessment by students, monitoring of progress of learning by the teacher and/or students, and high-quality feedback to students. Students are fully aware of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work.	Assessment is used in a sophisticated manner in instruction, through student involvement in establishing the assessment criteria, self-assessment by students, monitoring of progress by both students and teacher, and high-quality feedback to students from a variety of sources.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness	The teacher adheres to the instruction plan, even when a change would improve the lesson or address students' lack of interest. The teacher brushes aside student questions; when students experience difficulty, the teacher blames the students or their home environment.	The teacher attempts to modify the lesson when needed and to respond to student questions, with moderate success. The teacher accepts responsibility for student success, but has only a limited repertoire of strategies to draw upon.	The teacher promotes the successful learning of all students, making adjustments as needed to instruction plans and accommodating student questions, needs, and interests.	The teacher seizes an opportunity to enhance learning, building on a spontaneous event or student interests. The teacher ensures the success of all students, using an extensive repertoire of instructional strategies.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4a: Reflecting on Teaching	The teacher does not accurately assess the effectiveness of the lesson and has no ideas about how the lesson could be improved.	The teacher provides a partially accurate and objective description of the lesson but does not cite specific evidence. The teacher makes only general suggestions as to how the lesson might be improved.	The teacher provides an accurate and objective description of the lesson, citing specific evidence. The teacher makes some specific suggestions as to how the lesson might be improved.	The teacher's reflection on the lesson is thoughtful and accurate, citing specific evidence. The teacher draws on an extensive repertoire to suggest alternative strategies and predicts the likely success of each.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4b Maintaining Accurate Records	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and noninstructional records are either nonexistent or in disarray, resulting in errors and confusion.	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and noninstructional records are rudimentary and only partially.	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and noninstructional records are accurate, efficient, and effective.	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and noninstructional records are accurate, efficient, and effective, and students contribute to its maintenance.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4c: Communicating with Families	The teacher's communication with families about the instructional program or about individual students is poor. The teacher makes no attempt to engage families in the instructional program.	The teacher adheres to school procedures for communicating with families and makes modest attempts to engage families in the instructional program.	The teacher communicates frequently with families and successfully engages them in the instructional program.	The teacher's communication with families is frequent and sensitive to cultural traditions. The teacher successfully engages families in the instructional program, as appropriate.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4d: Participating in a Professional Community	The teacher avoids participating in a professional community or in school and district events and projects; relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving.	The teacher becomes involved in the professional community and in school and district events and projects when specifically asked; relationships with colleagues are cordial.	The teacher participates actively in the professional community and in school and district events and projects, and maintains positive and productive relationships with colleagues.	The teacher makes a substantial contribution to the professional community and to school and district events and projects, and assumes a leadership role among the faculty.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4e: Growing and Developing Professionally	The teacher does not participate in professional development activities and makes no effort to share knowledge with colleagues. The teacher is resistant to feedback from supervisors or colleagues.	The teacher participates in professional development activities that are convenient or are required, and makes limited contributions to the profession. The teacher accepts, with some reluctance, feedback from supervisors and colleagues.	The teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development based on an individual assessment of need and actively shares expertise with others. The teacher welcomes feedback from supervisors and colleagues.	The teacher actively pursues professional development opportunities and initiates activities to contribute to the profession. In addition, the teacher seeks feedback from supervisors and colleagues.
Evidence				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4f: Showing Professionalism	The teacher has little sense of ethics and professionalism and contributes to practices that are self-serving or harmful to students. The teacher fails to comply with school and district regulations and time lines.	The teacher is honest and well intentioned in serving students and contributing to decisions in the school, but the teacher's attempts to serve students are limited. The teacher complies minimally with school and district regulations, doing just enough to get by.	The teacher displays a high level of ethics and professionalism in dealings with both students and colleagues and complies fully and voluntarily with school and district regulations.	The teacher is proactive and assumes a leadership role in making sure that school practices and procedures ensure that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, are honored in the school. The teacher displays high standards of ethical conduct.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

